



Plan

Girls first

## Investing in girls: a good business!

Network meeting 9 April 2015



## Investing in girls: a good business!

### Youth Economic Empowerment - YEE

Youth unemployment is growing at an exponential rate in developing countries. According to estimates, a staggering 95 million young people will be unemployed by 2016. Consequently, Plan has developed a strategy to tackle unemployment affecting disadvantaged youth.

Plan trains and guides these individuals, especially young women, for a job with a local employer or self employment.

The selected young participants receive a three-month market based vocational training for a job in Marketing, Sales, Customer Relations, Hospitality and Retail. The training features a combination of technical and soft skills, teaching the participants how to present themselves, go through the application process, and work in a team. They also learn computer skills and basic English. The participants also follow an internship with local companies, after which they are guided to a permanent job. The local business community is directly involved in the programme to ensure that training properly suits local market needs. This combination is what makes this programme so successful.

The Youth Economic Empowerment programme is being conducted in cooperation with and with support of a number of companies, including Accenture and the GSRD Foundation. So far, the programme has helped thousands of young people in five Asian countries (India, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand and Indonesia) and Latin America (Brazil and the Dominican Republic) find work. Furthermore, Plan is working with Accenture to develop a YEE programme in Africa.

### Introduction by Monique van 't Hek, Plan Nederland National Director

In the YEE programmes, Plan works with local employers in the communities. Plan pays house calls in order to convince parents that training and education is important, and to assure them that training centres and workplaces are safe.

Women's participation in the labour market is essential. Girls who are given an opportunity can escape the spiral of poverty, which has a positive impact on both their family and the community. It generates a snowball effect that has an increasingly bigger impact. The World Bank estimated that developing countries can realise a combined growth of 92 billion dollars per annum if girls are given the same educational opportunities as boys. Plan Nederland is proud of the concerted effort made with the participating business communities - and the stimulus from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - to increase jobs in the countries in which Plan operates.



## Investing in girls: a good business!

### Network meeting 9 April 2015 - Kunsttuileen Beeldend Gesproken - De Hallen, Amsterdam

During the 'Investing in girls: a good business!' conference in the Amsterdam Arena on 9 October 2014, eight international companies expressed their commitment. They signed the ARENA Declaration and will strive for more and better work for girls and young women (16-24 years) in developing countries during the next three years.

Following the conference and as part of the Business Network, Plan Nederland organised a network meeting on 9 April 2015 for the partners that signed the ARENA Declaration. This meeting was also intended for companies and others interested in the subject. During this meeting, attention was paid to the partnerships with Team Relocations, Accenture and Basic Water Needs. In addition, two young people from Indonesia were present to share their personal accounts and experiences in the wake of undergoing vocational training and small business training through Plan. After the meeting, participants had an opportunity to network and try out the virtual reality goggles, which puts the wearer in the shoes of a girl in a developing country. Wearing the goggles, you immediately see the consequences associated with various choices; will you end up in a sweatshop? A brothel? Or in a classroom at school?

### Greeting and welcome by Davina Feelús, Plan Nederland Corporate Partnerships Advisor and network meeting facilitator

Plan welcomes all of the partners and everyone interested in YEE. The participants then briefly introduce themselves. Six months after signing the ARENA Declaration, we collectively review the past and look ahead to the future. What can we do to create jobs and entrepreneurship for young women in developing countries?

### Team Relocations - Jeroen Doting, Sales Director and Cees Zeevenhoven, CEO

Team Relocations specialises in moving companies, private customers and hospitals. They focus on the myriad aspects involved. For example, they handle all relocations for Philips and Shell worldwide.



As of July 2013, the service company switched from a decentralised CSR policy to a central CSR policy that revolves around YEE. Together with Plan, they made a three-year commitment to the Saksham project that connects all 15 offices. Ultimately, Team Relocations wants to train disadvantaged young people and offer them a job within the company's value chain.

### Accenture - Savitri Groag, CSR Manager Netherlands

In its corporate citizenship programme 'Skills to Succeed' Accenture focuses on teaching people the skills they need either to get a job or start their own business. By doing so, they build on two of Accenture's most important core competencies: training talent and working in partnerships in order to realise tangible, quantifiable results.

The initial goal was to reach 250,000 people by 2010; in the meantime, Accenture has helped over 800,000 people acquire 'Skills to Succeed'. Accenture's goal for 2020 is to provide over three million people worldwide with the skills required either to get a job or start a business.



So far, Accenture has been cooperating with Plan for five years to tackle youth unemployment in Asia, Latin America and soon in Africa. The partnership features an excellent match of core competencies: Plan brings presence and experience in local communities, which provides access to the target group, as well as experience with youth employment programmes and a network of NGOs for collaboration. Accenture brings technical expertise, financial support, access to a network of businesses, and local market information. Together, Plan and Accenture have already trained over 10,000 young people and assisted 7,500 young people in securing formal and recognised jobs, and will continue their efforts in the years ahead.

"Plan truly has added value: we aren't present in the places where support is needed most. We need Plan to design and set up training programmes, and to reach the target group. We are proud of Skills to Succeed and the partnership with Plan. Not only it motivates our employees but also our clients who find it inspiring but also expect this kind of social engagement."

## Lasiyatun and Zainur from Indonesia

Two Indonesian young people share their experiences after participating in vocational and entrepreneurial training through Plan. Lasiyatun is 24 years old, married and has a four-year old son. She lives in a remote village on Java; the capital is a three-hour walk from her home. She has been participating in the YEE programme for 18 months. So far, she has learned how to manage money and has learned marketing and sales skills in order to sell her products. She is now an independent small businesswoman who makes hand crafted wicker baskets. Lasiyatun is also the head of a group of women in her village who also make baskets. She handles the marketing for these items. She has learned how to sell her products. She handed out brochures about her products on the spot. Her ambition is to sell her products world-wide. During her presentation, Lasiyatun commanded the audience's full attention; prior to enrolling in the YEE training, this young woman was extremely shy!

Zainur is 19 years old and has a brother and two sisters. Previously, he worked as a construction worker; today, he has a permanent job in a supermarket. Plan was involved in various sponsor programmes in his village. He signed up as soon as he heard about the YEE programme. During the three months, he acquired technical as well as soft skills. After completing the training programme he was hired by the Alphamart supermarket. In the meantime, he has been awarded three certificates of appreciation, including one for best employee. His training included personal finance management, and consequently he was able to save enough to buy a goat and a scooter. Most of his friends are still construction workers; he is encouraging them to participate in the YEE programme.



## Basic Water Needs – Maria Besteman, Project & Communication Manager

Working with women is 'simply good business'.

Basic Water Needs (BWN) began cooperating with Plan in India on a clean drinking water project for families in the slums of Delhi in 2013. The project is a combination of providing information about clean drinking water, introducing BWN's Tulip water filter, and training female entrepreneurs to sell it. Street theatre, films and cartoons are used to raise awareness about clean drinking water amongst residents. BWN, which is based in Amsterdam and has a factory in Pondicherry, South India, meets the needs of both users and stakeholders by providing access to products that make access to safe drinking water easy and affordable.

In the meantime, the project is running in three slums in Delhi. In addition to launching awareness campaigns, 45 female entrepreneurs have been trained and four shops have been opened. There are plans to scale-up the project in other neighbourhoods in Delhi as well as more remote areas.

To Basic Water Needs, the added value of cooperating with Plan is the access to and knowledge of the local communities. There are challenges, too: forming a partnership and the stringent requirements that residents of the three slums had with respect to the water filter design. This year, Basic Water Needs is opening a new factory in Malawi with 20 jobs that will be carried out by women. A pilot involving 10 female entrepreneurs will be launched, too. In short: 'business as usual'.

## Jos Rath – Rath Group, researcher at the VU University Amsterdam,

Jos Rath works for the RathGroup as an 'Entrepreneurial Philanthropy & Fundraising' consultant, and is pursuing a PhD at the VU University Amsterdam. His thesis topic is cooperation between NGOs and businesses. The title of his interesting presentation during the network meeting was highly appropriate: 'From Babylonian language confusion to effective cross-pollination.'

How to prevent Babel-like confusion between a company and an NGO when the two join forces? Each organisation speaks its own language and has its own culture, and misunderstandings arise quickly. According to Jos, encounters and open discussions between companies and NGOs are vitally important, and lead to better cooperation. There has to be mutual understanding and respect for one another's business, alongside a common mission and strategic vision. Responsibilities and division of



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tasks are clear, and there is both the willingness and openness to learn from each other. Ultimately, the business case must suit both parties.

support from the Dutch government: 100,000 young women working by 2020! The network was also established in order to share knowledge and best practices, combine strengths, and create awareness about the economic disadvantage faced by women in developing countries and the possibilities for improving their position and local economies.



**Sandra Bruinse - Project leader  
Business Network Plan Nederland**

The 'Investing in girls: a good business!' conference on 9 October 2014 was the kick-off for Plan Nederland's Business Network.

### Business network

The network's main goal is to create jobs for young women in developing countries in cooperation with the Dutch business sector and with

### Added value

Separate from the sharing of knowledge and combining strengths in terms of economic security, the business network offers added value through networking opportunities. Plan Nederland has access to a global network of 72 Plan offices and 51 developing countries, local and international networks, NGOs and governments. Plan is also a member of UN Global Compact and is a partner in S4YE (Solutions for Youth Employment), a worldwide network involving the World Bank, Accenture and international NGOs.

### Partnership

Businesses and interested organisations can join the network. An individual partnership with Plan Nederland is also an option. Plan currently has 12 corporate partners, and is striving to achieve 30 partnerships with international companies by 2020. Plan enjoys building lasting relationships with its partners. For example, Plan Nederland has maintained a partnership with AkzoNobel for over 20 years.

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**For more information or a personal conversation, please contact**

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